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ARSON TRY GETS STORE OWNER'S BROTHER 2 YEARS

Lisa Fernandez

SAN JOSE A San Jose man was sentenced Friday to two years in prison for an attempted 1998 arson at a Redwood Shores convenience store that shut down the surrounding area for almost 14 hours.

Before a packed courtroom of the defendant's supporters, San Mateo County Superior Court Judge Mark Forcum admonished Siamak Nazhand, 36, for never accepting responsibility for the crime. On June 8, Nazhand faced SWAT teams in a standoff for more than half a day at his brother's store, Byrne's Market and Deli, that ended in his arrest. Since his conviction several months ago, Nazhand has been out on \$250,000 bail.

Prosecutors said Nazhand was drenched in gasoline when he was arrested, and police found a toy water gun filled with gas inside the store.

But the arson attempt went awry. The store's alarm went off and authorities saw Nazhand on top of the roof. SWAT teams got him down.

Nazhand's 42-year-old brother, Siavash Nazhand of Menlo Park, initially appeared to be implicated in the crime because he had just taken out insurance on the ailing business. But prosecutors said there was not enough evidence to charge him. He testified at Siamak Nazhand's trial under a grant of immunity.

Nearly three dozen family members attended the half-hour sentencing hearing to ask that Siamak Nazhand, who had no previous criminal record, be sentenced to probation and community service.

San Jose Mercury News

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